

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 1740

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SUBJECT: PRESS AND POLITICAL REACTION TO BRAZILIAN REJECTION OF US
SECURITY ASSISTANCE

REF: BRASILIA 1737 BRASILIA 1739

1. SUMMARY: BRAZILIAN REJECTION OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE DOMINATES
THE PRESS WITH EXTENSIVE NEWS AND ANALYSIS ABOUT BOG CLAIM
OF ALLEGED US INTERFERENCE IN BRAZILIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OVER
QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT REQUIRED UNDER SECURITY ASSISTANCE
ACT, AND US RESPONSE. GOVERNMENT REJECTION OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE
HAS RECEIVED UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FROM EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND POLITICAL
LEADERS OF BOTH PARTIES WHO HAVE RALLIED TO THE CALL OF NATIONAL
SOVERIGNTY. EXTENSIVE PRESS ANALYSES SPECULATE ON LINKAGE OF HUMAN
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RIGHTS REPORT TO US PRESSURES AGAINST FRG-GOB NUCLEAR ACCORD,
AND SEE BRAZILIAN REACTION AS AN ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE FIRMNESS IN
CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATIONS AS WELL AS TO MAINTAIN PRESTIGE AMONG
SOUTHERN CONE NEIGHBORS, AND TO APPEASE PRESSURES FROM NATIONALIST
ELEMENTS IN ARMED FORCES. COLUMNISTS GENERALLY SEE PRESIDENT'S
POLITICAL HAND STRENGTHENED BY MOVE BUT ONLY ONE HAS CALLED UPON
PRESIDENT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH INTERNAL HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE.

MILITARY SOURCES QUOTED IN PRESS HAVE INDICATED THEIR AGREEMENT WITH REJECTION, NOTING THAT GOB DEFENSE WILL NOT BE PREJUDICED BY LOSS OF FUNDS AND THAT OTHER FACETS OF GOB-USG MILITARY COOPERATION WILL CONTINUE. IN BRASILIA, ARGENTINE, URUGUAYAN AND PARAGUAYAN AMBASSADORS HAVE SUPPORTED GOB POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. BRAZILIAN REJECTION OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE DOMINATE THE SUNDAY PRESS UNDER SUCH BANNER HEADLINES AS "THE COUNTRY UNITED" AND "BRAZIL CHALLENGES THE USA" WITH EXTENSIVE NEWS AND ANALYSIS DETAILING THE CONTENTS OF BOTH THE BRAZILIAN NOTE REJECTING ASSISTANCE

AND US STATEMENT IN RESPONSE, AND EVENTS SURROUNDING TRANSMITTAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT BETWEEN USG AND GOB (REF TELS). PRESS IS STRESSING THAT GOB SEES HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AS INTERFERENCE IN BRAZIL'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS WHILE ALSO NOTING OFFICIAL US RESPONSE THAT INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS QUOTE TRANSCENDS NATIONAL FRONTIERS UNQUOTE AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. PAPERS ARE ALSO EMPHASIZING THAT REJECTION OF ASSISTANCE WILL NOT AFFECT GOB DEFENSE AND CLAIMING POSSIBLE LINKAGE OF US HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORT TO PRESSURE AGAINST NUCLEAR ACCORD.

3. SHORT ITAMARATY STATEMENT RELEASED LATE MARCH 5 RE US RESPONSE TO GOB REJECTION WAS ALSO HIGHLIGHTED. SPOKESMAN SAID, QUOTE, THE COMMUNICATION OF THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES ONLY SEEKS TO JUSTIFY THE MECHANICS OF THE FACTS REGARDING ITS ACTION AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BASIC POSITION OF BRAZIL, END QUOTE. ESTADO CLAIMS THAT PLANALTO SPOKESMAN COLONEL CARAMARGO IN EXPLAINING THE GOB ACTION, SAID OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT, QUOTE IT IS NOT WORTHY OF BELONGING IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE BRAZILIAN UNCLASSIFIED

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GOVERNMENT. END QUOTE.

4. IN O ESTADO ARTICLE, LEADING COLUMNIST CARLOS CHAGAS CITES AND APPARENTLY ACCEPTS ANALYSIS OF "AUTHORITATIVE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORS" THAT INJUSTICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT IN FACE OF PRESIDENT GEISEL'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEMONSTRATES THAT REPORT IS DESIGNED AS ONE MORE INSTRUMENT OF PRESSURE AGAINST GERMAN/BRAZILIAN NUCLEAR ACCORD. CHAGAS AFFIRMS THAT, COMING AT A TIME OF GROWING INTERNAL CRITICISM OF REGIME, "CRISIS" BETWEEN US AND BRAZIL OVER NUCLEAR ACCORD AND SUBORDINATE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, HAS SERVED TO RALLY SUPPORT FOR GEISEL AS DEFENDER OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND TO STRENGTHEN HIS HAND, INCLUDING HIS POWER IN THE EVENTUAL CHOICE OF SUCCESSOR. HOWEVER, NATIONALIST ELEMENTS IN THE ARMED FORCES HAVE GAINED STRENGTH. EFFECT ON IMPENDING POLITICAL REFORMS WILL NONETHELESS BE NEGLIGIBLE, SAYS CHAGAS, AS IT IS CLEAR THAT THOSE REFORMS WOULD NOT IN ANY CASE BE LIBERALIZING. OVER LONG RUN, HOWEVER, AMERICAN PRSSURES CAN ONLY SERVE TO RETARD DISTENSAO SINCE GOB WILL ALWAYS SEEK TO AVOID APPEARANCE OF BENDING TO EXTERNAL

PRESSURE.

5. IN ARTICLE CARRIED SAME ISSUE OF O ESTADO, RASILIA CORRESPONDENT CARLOS CONDE DECLARES THAT BRAZILIAN MOVE WAS INEVITABLE, GIVEN (1) REACTIONS ADOPTED AS A "POINT OF HONOR" AMONG "CERTAIN SECTORS" SENSITIVE TO CRITICISMS OF REGIME INSTITUTIONS (CRITICISM WHICH KISSINGER, UNLIKE JIMMY CARTER, SOUGHT TO AVOID), (2) NEED TO AVOID SHOW OF WEAKNESS WHICH WOULD VITIATE STRONG BRAZILIAN POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH US ON NUCLEAR ACCORD; (3) SERIOUS LOSS OF PRESTIGE WERE BRAZIL NOT TO FOLLOW EXAMPLE OF ITS WEAKER NEIGHBORS (ARGENTINA, CHILE, URUGUAY) IN REJECTING INTERNAL INTERFERENCE TIED TO MILITARY ASSISTANCE. CONDE CITES WIDESPREAD OFFICIAL CONVICTION THAT IN RAISING QUESTION OF BRAZILIAN INSTITUTIONS THREE DAYS AFTER CHRISTOPHER VISIT, US IS REVEALING THE HARDNESS OF ITS POSITION ONNUCLEAR ACCORD; AT SAME TIME, HE FORESEES THAT LATEST INCIDENT WILL HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECT ON CLIMATE FOR FUTURE UNCLASSIFIED

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BRAZIL/US NEGOTIATIONS ON SUBJECT.

6. COLUMNIST CLOVIS ROSSI REACHES SIMILAR CONCLUSION, AND FORESEES AS IMMINENT MORE SERIOUS STEPS BEARING ON BRAZIL/US RELATIONSHIP. HE ASCRIBES BRAZILIAN DECISION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO A COMBINATION (1) ATTEMPT TO AVOID IRRITATING US CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN BRAZIL; (2) REGIME EFFORT TO RALLY SUPPORT ON NATIONALIST GROUNDS AT A TIME OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL DIFFICULTIES (3) NATIONALIST PRESSURES WITHIN ARMED FORCES, WHICH MAY BECOME A DOMINANT FACTOR, WITH DOMESTIC AS WELL AS FOREIGN CONSEQUENCES.

7. JORNAL DO BRASIL COLUMNIST

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ERDA-07 OES-06 IO-13 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BURNOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

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CARLOS CASTELLO BRANCO NOTES THAT THE AMERICAN CHALLENGE WORKS IN FAVOR OF THE PRESIDENT AND WILL AID HIM INTERNALLY, BUT THAT THE SOLIDARITY FROM WHICH THE PRESIDENT WILL BENEFIT WILL NOT EXCLUDE AN INTERNAL PREOCCUPATION WITH THE COMPLETE POLITICAL NORMALIZATION OF THE COUNTRY. HE CONCLUDES THAT THE AMERICAN REPORT WAS "IMPERTINENT" WHEN PRESENTED OFFICIALLY BUT THAT EXISTING INTERNAL REPORTS ON REFORMS MUST BE STUDIED AND CLARIFICATIONS OF ACCUSATIONS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS MADE, NOT HOWEVER BY POLICE AND MILITARY OFFICIALS.

8. REACTIONS OF POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE BEEN TOTALLY IN SUPPORT OF THE GOB POSITION. SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MAGALHAES PINTO SAID QUOTE THE ATTITUDE OF THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT ...WAS PERFECT AND THE ONLY ONE POSSIBLE IN THIS CASE. WE MUST SUPPORT PRESIDENT GEISEL BECAUSE IT WOULD BE A DISASTER WERE UNCLASSIFIED

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WE TO ACCEPT INTERFERENCE IN OUR EXTERNAL RELATIONS ON THE PART OF ANY COUNTRY. UNQUOTE. MAGALHAES PINTO ADDED THAT "THE \$50 MILLION IN CREDITS DID NOT CONSTITUTE GIFTS, EMOLUMENTS OR INDEED AID. THEY ARE PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT WE AS A MAJOR LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY HAVE IN THE DEFENSE OF CONTINENTAL INTEREST. END QUOTE. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD RECEIVE WELL THE BRAZILIAN REJECTION. QUOTE THEY WILL UNDERSTAND OUR REASONS AND THE DEMONSTRATION THAT BRAZIL IS CONSCIOUS OF ITS OBLIGATIONS AND WATCHES OVER ITS SOVEREIGNTY. UNQUOTE.

9. OTHER POLITICIANS GENERALLY ECHOED MAGALHAES PINTO'S COMMENTS. MDB SECRETARY GENERAL THALES RAMALHO INDICATED THAT HE WANTED AN AUDIENCE WITH PRRESIDENT GEISEL IN ORDER TO SHOW HIM THE OPPOSITION'S SUPPORT QUOTE IN THIS HISTORIC MOMENT IN WHICH THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE COUNTRY IS IN QUESTION END QUOTE. SIMILARY, MDB LEADER IN THE ASSEMBLY ALENCAR FURTADO INDICATED

QUOTE THE BRAZILIAN OPPOSITION DEFENDS SELF DETERMINATION OF THE PEOPLE, THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF NATIONS. THE OPPOSITION, LOYAL TO ITS COMMITMENT TO THE BRAZILIAN PEOPLE, DOES NOT ACCEPT THE NORTH AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF BRAZIL. UNQUOTE FRANCO MONTORO, MDB LEADER IN THE SENATE, SAID THAT THE GOB ACTION QUOTE, WILL NOT IMPEDE US BUT ON THE CONTRARY GIVE US MORE AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO FIGHT INTENSELY FOR INSTITUTIONAL NORMALIZATION OF PUBLIC LIFE. WE SUPPORT THE ATTITUDE OF THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT IN DEFENSE OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. UNQUOTE. ARENA LEADER IN THE SENATE, EURICO REZENDE, WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE USG WOULD QUOTE RECONSIDER ITS AIM, MANIFESTED CERTAINLY IN A MOMENT OF UNHAPPY INSPIRATION, SO THAT BRAZIL AND THE US WILL BROADEN THEIR RELATIONS TO THE ADVANTAGE OF BOTH IN SERVICE TO THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY. UNQUOTE. FRANCELINO PEREIRA, FORMER PRESIDENT OF ARENA, APPLAUDED THE MEASURE QUOTE ADOPTED IN THE DEFENSE OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE THAT HAS ALWAYS CHARACTERIZED BRAZILIAN DIPLOMACY. END QUOTE.

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10. A BRAZILIAN MILITARY SPOKESMAN INDICATED THAT THE REJECTION OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE, WHICH THE ARMY ENDORSED, WOULD NOT INVOLVE THOSE MILITARY PROGRAMS BETWEEN US AND GOB SUCH AS THE EXCHANGE OF STUDENTS IN MILITARY SCHOOLS AND SUBJECTS RELATED TO THE JOINT BRAZIL/US MILITARY COMMISSION(JBUSMC). THE ARMY MINISTRY SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED THAT BRAZIL WAS REJECTING A QUOTE SIMPLE OPENING OF CREDIT, END QUOTE. FOR THE ACQUISITION OF ARMS FROM THE US. HE GAVE ASSURANCES THAT THE REJECTION WOULD NOT AFFECT THE CAPABILITY OF THE ARMED FORCES. JORNAL DO BRASIL NOTED THAT MILITARY CIRCLES HAD CONSIDERED THE GOB WOULD ADOPT SUCH AN ATTITUDE, NOTING THAT BRAZIL WAS NOT USING MUCH OF THE CREDITS IT HAD RECENTLY BEEN OFFERED.

11. A BRIEF PIECE IN GOVERNMENT MOUTHPIECE CORREIO BRASILENSE INDICATED A DENUNCIATION OF USG-GOB MILITARY ACCORDS MAY BE UNDER CONSIDERATION, AND THAT AT THE END OF LAST YEAR THE SUBJECT WAS STUDIED BY THE PLANALTO. GENERALLY STRAIGHT-FORWARD BACKGROUND ARTICLES IN O ESTADO, DRAWING IN PART ON MILITARY SOURCES, POINT OUT RELATIVE INSIGNIFICANCE OF REJECTED AID "2.5 PERCENT OF 1977 ARMED FORCES BUDGET), AND DESCRIBE THE HIGH DEGREE OF BRAZILIAN SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN PRODUCTION OF WAR MATERIAL, EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN MORE SOPHISTICATED ITEMS (PARTICULARLY FOR THE NAVY), MOST OF WHICH, WITH EXCEPTION OF SOPHISTICATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS, CAN BE READILY OBTAINED FROM OTHER WESTERN SUPPLIERS. BRAZILIAN MILITARY CIRCLES ARE REPORTED AS CALM AND UNCONCERNED ABOUT STRICTLY MILITARY CONSEQUENCES OF THE DECISION.

12. JORNAL DO BRASIL QUOTES FREDERICK GIBBS OF ITT, PRESIDENT

OF THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN RIO, AS SAYING QUOTE I
HOPE THAT THIS BRAZILIAN ATTITUDE DOES NOT EVOLVE TO THE POINT THAT
THE GOOD COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONS THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES
HAE ALWAYS MAINTAINED, ARE AFFECTED. END QUOTE. PAPER ALSO INDICATED
THAT BANK OF AMERICA AND CITIBANK REPRESENTATIVES SAID THAT
THE EPISODE WILL NOT HAVE ANY OVERRIDING CONSEQUENCE IN THE GROWTH
OR MAINTENANCE OF THE RHYTHM OF LOANS AND INVESTMENTS IN BRAZIL.
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RICHARD HUBER OF CITIBANK NOTED THAT QUOTE AMERICAN BANKS LEND
CONSIDERABLE RESOURCES TO IRON CUTAIN COUNTRIES. END QUOTE.

13. JORNAL DO BRASIL CLAIMS THAT RADIO AND TV NETWORKS RECEIVED
AN ORDER TRANSMITTED BY THE FEDERAL POLICE PROHIBITING NEWS OR
COMMENTARY ABOUT EVENTS RELATED TO THE REJECTION UF US MILITARY
ASSISTANCE. THE ORDER STIPULATED THAT THE NETWORKS WOULD BE
PERMITTED TO DIVULGE ONLY THE OFFICIAL GOB NOTES.

14. IN BRASILIA THE AMBASSADORS OF URUGUAY, ARTENTINA AND PARAGUAY
ALL SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE GOB. ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR CAMILLION
SAID QUOTE THE SUPPORT OF ALL THE ATTITUDES THAT REPRESENT A DEFENSE
OF THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-INTERVENTION AND THE REJECTION OF INTERFERENCE

OF STATES IN THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PROBLEMS OF OTHER STATES
AND OTHER PEOPLE IS AN ARGENTINE TRADITION. END QUOTE. URUGUAYAN
AMBASSADOR MANINI RIOS SAID QUOTE THE BRAZILIAN POSITION IS EXACTLY
THE POSITION OF URUGUAY AND ALL OF LATIN AMERICA...THE UNITED
STATES APPEARS TO WANT TO ACT AS THE MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL
CONDUCT, INTERVENING AS A CENSOR IN ALL INTERNAL SUBJECTS OF THE
WORLD, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY THINK IT DOES NOT PREJUDICE THEIR
MATERIAL INTERESTS. END QUOTE. IN A MORE CAUTIOUS VEIN, PARAGUAYAN
AMBASSADOR BENITES SAID "BRAZIL IS SOVERIGN AND DOES WHAT IS
BEST TO LOOK AFTER ITS INTERESTS. FROM THIS POINT OF VIEW IT IS
POSSIBLE THAT IT (THE REJECTION) IS CORRECT. END QUOTE.
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